

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and reconsideration of the application identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.116 and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 8-13 stand allowed (Official Action at page 1).

By the above amendments, claims 1-7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Entry of the above amendments is proper at least because they place the application in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal. See M.P.E.P. §714.12.

In the Official Action, claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,990,997 (*Jones et al*). Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,184,957 (*Mori et al*). These rejections are moot in light of the above cancellation of claims 1-7. Accordingly, withdrawal of the above rejections is respectfully requested.

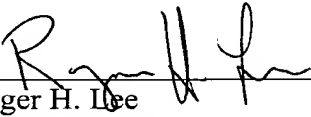
From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be in order, and such action is earnestly solicited.

Application No. 09/819,861
Attorney's Docket No. 030662-071

If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: February 12, 2004